ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

A World of Secrets

Executive Registry
86- 3636X

STAT FROM:

STAT Director of Training and Education
1026 CofC

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE 11 August 1986

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)	DATE RECEIVED	DATE FORWARDED	OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)
1. Executive Registry 7E12 HQS	18 AUG 1986		cmj	
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3. Executive Director 7D55 HQS	20 AUG 1986			3. Attached excerpt from Walter Laqueur's recent book A World of Secrets. Interesting! We've made some progress, but much remains to be done.
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The early political messengers and reporters knew from Machiavelli not to be deceived by appearances, and that *fortuna* was fickle and mysterious —one might have to act quickly to seize her. Shakespeare impressed on them the art of dissimulation: "Why, I can smile and murder while I smile" *(Henry VI).* August Vera stressed the importance of *sang froid*—to listen much and to talk little. Among other qualities stressed, one finds discretion, infinite patience, tact, vigilance, calmness, subtlety, firmness, force of mind, and prudence.

How was the intelligence gatherer of old to acquire background knowledge about the country to which he was accredited? An anonymous Spanish diplomat of the late seventeenth century provided detailed guidance, which still applies:

> He must spend his spare time in reading its histories or chronicles, must gain a knowledge of its laws, of the privileges of its provinces, the character of the natives, their temperament and inclination; and if he should desire to serve in his office with the goodwill of his own and of a foreign people, he must try and accommodate himself to the character of the natives, though at the cost of doing violence to his own, he must listen to them, talk to them and even flatter them. For flattery is the magnet which everywhere attracts goodwill. . . . Anyone who listens to many people and consorts with them, sometimes meets one who cannot keep a secret and even habitually makes a confidant of someone in order to show that he is a man of importance. . . . Should he lack friends and ability to discover the truth and to verify his suspicions, money can help him, for it is and always has been the master key to the most closely locked archives.[9]

Should he consort with members of the opposition? The issue was raised by de Callières, and it still preoccupies American diplomats today. Our eighteenth-century guide advised against it, except perhaps in England and Holland, as such contacts were least risky there. Whether representatives should be left abroad for a long time at the risk of their "going native" was much discussed. The tendency was to leave them for many years, even decades, at their post, though a British report of 1861 warned against the possibility of divided loyalties.

The early writers also reflected on what kind of people would be best fitted to serve abroad. De Callières believed that though diplomatic genius was born, not made, there were many qualities that could be developed with practice. He and Wicquefort agreed that the study of history was the best teacher, and that the knowledge of languages was absolutely essential. To this, needless to say, a knowledge of literature, science, mathematics, and art was added. Last, but not least, one needed the ability to express oneself clearly and objectively in reports.

Most of the problems vexing these early experts have not gone away. This also refers to recruitment and training; the present practice of select-

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ing young recruits straight out of college is wasteful, if not pernicious.[10] They are unlikely to know their own minds sufficiently, nor is it easy to assess someone accurately before he has been exposed to the turbulence of "real life"; it is unlikely that his character has already been fully formed. The applicant may have an excellent record as a student of the theory of decision making, yet his most important decision to date may have been the choice of a course or a subject for a research paper.[11]

There are, of course, some profound differences between the diplomat and the intelligence agent—the assignments are different and in some respects even opposed. But both diplomats and intelligence agents have the same overall tasks—to observe sharply, to understand politics, and to convey their findings to their superiors in clear, objective, and succinct reports.

How can some of these qualities be taught to young recruits? The present state of affairs is unsatisfactory. The Church report noted that the post mortems of major U.S. intelligence failures "pointed in all cases to the shortage of talented personnel."[12] This should have been no surprise, for most of the effort had gone into training operators, rather than analysts. At the time of the Church report, the CIA's Office of Training (OTR) provided some in-house courses on management and executive development. Only one-quarter of those going to external training went for courses lasting longer than six weeks. The training department announced that it was also providing programs in "methodology and research techniques," and that "much of the substantive training for intelligence analysts takes place outside the agency, both in academic institutions and in other government departments."[13] There is no reason to return to the painful subject of methodology again. As for the "substantive training" in other academic institutions and government departments, of course, all efforts to broaden cultural horizons ought to be welcomed. There are excellent universities providing fine courses in history, literature, foreign policy, psychology, economics, and (rarely) national security. But there are no courses teaching political judgment or the specific skills the intelligence analyst needs.[14] Courses on political intelligence hardly existed ten years ago. Today, political science professors or senior former intelligence officials teach the subject in a few universities as part of general national security programs.[15] Perhaps the best way to study intelligence is to go over past experience, with famous cases in the history of the field reviewed and critiqued by former intelligence professionals.

But such reviews cannot replace systematic training, which should take place in a national defense university or special intelligence college. At present the scope of existing institutions is too narrow and the duration of the program too short to meet intelligence needs. What the U.S. offers

today is not even remotely comparable in depth with the courses given at the Military-Diplomatic Academy in Moscow. An aspiring American intelligence officer may learn such useful arts as shaking off a tail in Washington's K Street, how to prepare a meeting with an agent, or when and how to use a dead drop; intelligence analysts will receive lectures about the fundamentals of intelligence production (two hours), document security (one hour), "Delphi" and "Group Think" (one-and-a-half hours). There are textbook-style politico-military exercises, and a great deal of time is devoted to statistics, including the minicomputer programs available for the Washington area.

It is unrealistic to take for granted that the recruit has a more or less rounded education, or knows languages, or is familiar with at least the rudiments of Marxism-Leninism and other political doctrines, or has read the essential literature in the field of international relations. Unless the recruit has traveled, he or she will be naively ignorant about foreign countries and will know very little about the philosophy and practice of communism, of social democracy; indeed, of any form of government that of their own country. However eager, intelligent, and adaptable the recruit may be, ignorance of the outside world would make it highly irresponsible to assign him or her to a position in intelligence at home, let alone abroad, without further training. This training should start from scratch, be highly intensive, and last for several years.[16]

But is it possible to teach political judgment? Up to the end of World War II, the leading Soviet agents abroad and the main Western spies were self-made men. In his autobiography, Leopold Trepper, the head of the *Rote Kapelle,* the main Soviet espionage network in Western Europe during World War II, ridiculed the authors who had credited him with long and intensive training in a military academy. Rudolf Abel pontificated in his retirement about the qualifications of a spy: he must be a hard and painstaking worker, have a broad outlook, erudition, knowledge of foreign languages, perseverance, stamina, willpower, and skill. To the extent that Abel possessed these qualifications, he had not acquired them in a special college but in the school of life. Trepper and Abel belonged to a bygone period in the history of intelligence, but as long as HUMINT is in demand, agents will need pretty much the same set of attitudes and skills.

Paraphrasing de Callières, it may well be that intelligence genius is born, not made. But it is also true that intelligence needs not only geniuses, and that political judgment and understanding can be taught—at least up to a point. The same applies to writing. Few will attain the standards of a Bertrand Russell or a George Orwell, but almost everyone can be taught to write clearly and simply, to avoid neologisms and bureaucratic gibberish.[17] A full-scale effort to improve the quality of intelligence recruitment

and training is clearly called for if we hope even to approach optimal performance.

Intelligence in a Cold Climate

The CIA and other intelligence agencies have suffered from grave handicaps in their recruitment for many years. The revelations and the attacks of the late 1960s and 1970s deterred many potential recruits from even considering a career in intelligence and CIA recruiters were often banned from campuses. The leaks and sensational allegations created the impression that most if not all members of the intelligence community were involved in activities which, if not criminal, were at least morally reprehensible. Wrongdoings, even mere errors of judgment, were frequently exaggerated and described in the most lurid light, and the basest of motives were attributed to those responsible.

True, a former DCI (Admiral Stansfield Turner) has claimed that during his period of office during the late 1970s the CIA succeeded in casting its net much wider than earlier, when so many of its recruits had come from certain elite schools, especially the Ivy League colleges. This broader base may have been all to the good, but it remains true that the CIA seldom attracted young people equal in caliber to those who had joined in the late 1940s and 1950s. Frequently, the new personnel lacked the international background, intellectual stature, and motivation that had characterized its predecessors.

Toward 1980 the situation began to change. In the late Carter years there were the events in Afghanistan and Poland; at the same time, job prospects for new college graduates became dimmer. Such developments made recruitment easier, but some of the old problems were no nearer to solution. What could intelligence offer by way of career advancement? Intelligence, like other government branches, offers security but little else to help it compete with rival employers. The financial rewards are modest, particularly considering the hardships undergone by the employees and their families. The first three DCIs received a category *V* salary—four levels below cabinet rank. Although the rank is higher now, the earlier situation showed how little importance government attached to its "first line of national defense." Today the CIA has some supergrade positions (GS 17 and 18 in current jargon); this is more than most government agencies have, but virtually all of these positions go to people with managerial responsibilities. According to the Church report, only the small Office of

stemmed from the erroneous belief that America is particularly good at solving managerial problems.

Another misconception that has played a negative role is the belief that modern machinery (or gadgetry) will provide judgment superior to the human mind. The corollary of this error is the assumption that enough quantity automatically turns into a new quality; that is, if there is an unsolved question, more intelligence data will provide the answer. This may be so in some cases, but not in most instances. Technical means of collection already produce more information of certain kinds than can be analyzed, whereas other secrets cannot be penetrated at all. Lastly, there is the belief that if only intelligence were firmly grounded in certain "policy sciences" concepts, it could improve intelligence performance all along the line.

5. There is no panacea for providing better intelligence, no sensational breakthroughs or approaches which no one has thought of before. The only realistic prospect for genuine improvement depends upon prosaic measures. These include the recruitment of promising individuals, careful personnel evaluation, thorough assignment processes, extensive and systematic training in relevant subjects, a constant search for better means of collection, and the pursuit of efficiency with a minimum of bureaucratic procedure. To this one may add that analytical competition also has its uses and should be encouraged.

Intelligence agencies need employees in many fields; in some of them, technical proficiency may be an adequate criterion for recruitment. In others the requirements are broader, and while recruitment mistakes are unavoidable, there have to be mechanisms to remedy such errors. This refers not only to cases of incompetence or major deficiencies of character —intelligence can afford mediocrity only within limits. The record shows that relatively low priority has been given to the selection of recruits. The methods and requirements used ought to be reexamined.

Far greater emphasis ought to be given to training. The courses presently taught inside and outside the intelligence community constitute an advance in comparison with the state of affairs ten or fifteen years ago, but they are still quite insufficient. Intelligence needs either a high-quality central academy—or several such institutions —specializing in military, political, economic, and scientific-technological intelligence. Such an institution or institutions should engage in systematic, full-time training, employing the best talent available. There should be a heavy emphasis on subjects directly relevant to intelligence, in particular, subjects not systematically covered in university education should be stressed. Such study should be combined with practical work, at headquarters or in the field. In the course of a training period of several years, the specific abilities and

A World of Secrets. By Walter Laqueur. Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, New York. 1985; 404 pp.

weaknesses of the trainees would become obvious. Thus it would be easier to direct new members to the kind of work in which they are most likely to feel at home and achieve most.

Recruitment and training are critical for the future performance of intelligence. While lip service has always been paid to the need for superior recruitment and training, the attention actually devoted, the financial allocations made, and the quality of appointments tend to show that these tasks have never been given the priority they deserve.

6. Intelligence should never be satisfied with its performance. There will always be a great deal of reliable and detailed information on subjects not in demand, whereas information on the most urgent issues will often be sparse, unreliable, or even nonexistent. Unless intelligence tries constantly to improve its performance, it is bound to deteriorate. Intelligence is necessarily bureaucratic in structure and part of a wider bureaucratic network. Therefore it is always threatened by the negative features of bureaucracy, such as routine, innate conservatism, preoccupation with questions of procedure and organization rather than substance, and the stifling of creative thought and fresh initiatives. In the final analysis, intelligence will be judged by performance—not by the number of memoranda circulated or by adherence to rules established to promote the smooth functioning of a bureaucratic organization. In many respects intelligence is—or should be—the very antithesis of bureaucratic thought and practice. It can fulfill its functions only if it constantly resists the encroachment of bureaucratic routine. Eternal vigilance in this matter is the precondition of success.

7. The central effort of U.S. intelligence has been on strategic-military intelligence. The importance of knowledge about the Soviet strategic effort (and, to a lesser extent, that of other countries) or of the order of battle, need not be stressed. America's defense and that of its allies depend on the findings of intelligence in this field. But the decisive developments in world politics in the last decades have been political and economic in nature, a situation that is unlikely to change soon. These developments are taking place in Asia and Africa, in Europe and Latin America. It is much easier to monitor the deployment of missile launchers than the frequently intangible and inchoate political trends in faraway countries which cannot be quantified and are open to divergent interpretations. A reorientation of the intelligence effort in this direction is long overdue precisely because of these difficulties, and because certainties in the political field are so elusive. The shift of attention to the political scene raises the question whether intelligence should also serve as one of the tools of foreign policy—not only watching the course of events, but also trying to influence it.

8. There are various ways and means to exert influences abroad—